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AHDC Email Network – Cultural Competency and Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services (CLAS)
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1) *The High Costs of Language Barriers in Medical Malpractice*

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This study analyzed medical malpractice claims of a malpractice carrier that insures in four states (the Carrier) to identify when language barriers may have resulted in harm to the patient. It was conducted by the University of California at Berkeley, School of Public Health pursuant to a contract with the National Health Law Program (NHeLP). The purpose of the study was to identify malpractice claims in which language barriers may have had a direct or indirect impact on the patient's health outcome. The recommendations include that medical malpractice carriers should explore ways to improve monitoring and tracking of claims brought by LEP patients due to ineffective communication. Further, carriers should consider establishing specific codes for their cases to identify languages spoken by patients and providers, as well as which language services were (or were not) provided.

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